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Patrolling the Tigris helps prevent IEDs

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BALAD, Iraq (Feb. 17, 2006) -- Stopping the flow of supplies is one of the most basic ways to stop an armed aggressor. If they don't have the means to fight you, there will be no fight, as the concept goes.

A platoon from Crazy Company, 1-8 Combined Arms Battalion, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Task Force Band of Brothers, was patrolling the banks of the Tigris River in an effort to stop the flow of improvised explosive device materials from crossing it.

"There is some intel that believes the north side of the river - which is not patrolled as heavily as where we're at now - they could sneak into the backdoor of our (area of operations)," said 1st Lt. Bryan Feldmayer, platoon leader, Crazy Co., 1-8 CAB.

The point in the river Feldmayer's platoon was patrolling has easy access to one of the main supply routes used by military patrols across Iraq.

"(By) crossing the river with IED materials, small arms, RPGs ... and just load it onto a truck and bam, they're heading down (the MSR)," Feldmayer said.

If any of the AIF are brazen enough to try to cross the ancient river on this patrol, it would help to soften the resistance against coalition forces and the emerging Iraqi security forces.

"If you catch the guys, detain them or engage them, then they're out of the fight, not to mention whatever materials they were bringing," Feldmayer said. "It also might force them to alter their route and run into one of our checkpoints or our normal patrols or (traffic control points.)"

By putting a military presence in this region, coalition forces hope to compel the anti Iraqi forces into changing their tactics.

"They may get scared if they feel our presence here then they'll try another route and then we'll adapt to that," Feldmayer said.

Prior to setting up the observation points, Feldmayer's platoon delivered a hot meal to another Crazy Company platoon living with the Iraqi army at a forward location.

"The IA provide their own food, but we wanted to make sure it was double the amount if that wasn't the case," Feldmayer said.



